

**GED 2002 Teachers' Handbook of Lesson Plans**

<b>Content Area</b> Language Arts, Reading	<b>Lesson Title</b> <i>Clown or Comedian?</i>	<b>Correlation to Framework</b> 04.01/04.04/04.05/04.06	<b>Lesson Number</b> 39
<p><b>Objectives/Learner Outcomes</b></p> <p>At the end of the lesson, the learner will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare and contrast the differences between a comedian and a clown</li> <li>• Identify elements that differentiate both categories</li> </ul>		<p><b>Materials/Resources/Internet Sites/Handouts/Worksheets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dictionary</li> <li>• Handout – <b>Compare/Contrast</b></li> <li>• Handout – <b>Comedians Versus Clowns</b></li> <li>• Computers and Internet access</li> <li>• Overhead projector</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Pre-Requisite Knowledge</b></p> <p>The learner should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a dictionary as a tool</li> <li>• Understand information when provided</li> <li>• Define the terms compare and contrast</li> </ul>		<p><b>Key Words</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clown</li> <li>• Comedian</li> <li>• Comedy</li> <li>• Farce</li> <li>• Compare</li> <li>• Contrast</li> <li>• Venn Diagram</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Anticipatory Set/Introduction</b></p> <p><b>Say:</b> In drama, television, and movies throughout history, there have been many actors that have interpreted funny roles. Think about some of the comedies that you have seen. There are many different types of comedies.</p> <p><b>Ask:</b> How many of you have ever been to a circus? Encourage students to participate and give you as many details as possible. As volunteers begin narrating their circus experiences, pay close attention to the word clown. If mentioned, pause and ask the volunteer to give you a description of what a clown is. Then ask the class if they have ever seen a comedian perform at a circus.</p> <p><b>Say:</b> Today, we will study the differences between a clown and a comedian. In acting, there are many techniques to assist actors in developing a particular character. Some characters are called prototype characters. This means that they are a standard in the acting profession and are easily recognized by an audience. However, funny roles are not all the same. We will talk about the behaviors that differentiate comedians from clowns.</p>			
<p><b>Preview Questions for Lesson</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is a clown? A comedian?</li> <li>2. What is comedy? A farce?</li> </ol>			

### **Instructional Outline**

**Ask:**

1. Does anyone know the differences or contrasts between a comedian and a clown?
2. Does anyone know what the similarities are between a comedian and a clown?

**Say:** Before we get started talking about the similarities and differences between comedians and clowns, let's discuss a little bit about each one.

Plays are written to showcase a series of actions that actors take to share a story. In comedy, an actor is involved in a chain of reactions that are very vivid. The actor or character reacts to the circumstances surrounding him or her. Each character reacts differently. Based on the psychological aspect of the play, reactions generally vary in tone. Comedians can be viewed as "just like us" – they react to circumstances similar to the way we would react to them. When upset, a comedian has a reason for the feeling, just like we would. When something positive happens, the comedic actor is content, just like we would be if the same thing happened to us. In other words, the comedian always responds in an average way. He/she captures a common situation and underlines its silliness. The comedian has a particular way of thinking. Comments are all part of the existence of comedic expression.

On the other hand, a clown reacts completely differently than we would. Their behaviors can be viewed as an exact opposite from the way we would behavior in a similar situation. Think about a clown who sees a "harmful" little kitten and jumps back nervously with a horror-struck expression on his/her face. Another example would be the old act of a gun being pointed at a clown, and the clown reacting in a very calm manner. A clown's actions are not justified either physically or psychologically, nor are they predictable. The clown may pet a dog in the middle of a very busy road and still seem relaxed, even though people all around are shouting at him/her to get out of the road!

Clowns act mentally immature, much like children. They react very slowly, but when they do respond their reaction is often an explosion of emotions. Think about the clowns that you have seen. They always seem to be a little frustrated. A clown is in no way a real person. In order to get a laugh, clowns seem capable of the wildest of reactions. Often we call their actions a farce.

Comedy is often identified as intellectual, whereas farce is physical. Both are enjoyable forms of media. That is why we have programs, such as sit-coms or stand-up comedy, where actors or performers make people laugh. These programs are real to us. They look like us, dress like us, and may even talk about daily things such as the weather or politics.

The farcical world of clowns, however, is far removed from what we do in our daily lives. Clowns dress in a ridiculous manner. Their jokes are physical and their reactions are absurd. Because their reactions are generally unexpected, they cause a sensation in the audience and generally make people laugh.

However, both comedians and clowns have something in common, they make people LAUGH!

<b>Process/Activities</b>			
<p><b>Say:</b> Today, we will be talking about the differences and similarities between a comedian and a clown. As we discuss the similarities and differences, I want you to write down some of the traits on the Handout – <b>Compare/Contrast</b>. You may wish to make notes on the back of the handout and then transfer your ideas at the end of the discussion or you may take your notes right on the handout. The handout is called a Venn Diagram. Many of you have probably used something like this in other classes.</p> <p>After the mini-lecture, discuss how students viewed differences and similarities in comedians versus clowns. Next, have students apply their knowledge to a real-life situation by having them name their favorite “funny” person. Give them the Handout – <b>Comedians Versus Clowns</b>. Have them complete the activity and share their work with the class.</p>			
<b>Product/Evaluation/Summary</b>			
<p>Divide the class into pairs or small groups of three to four students. Based on the information that they have received, the students will develop two short scenes that can be presented to the class. The message or topic of both scenes should be the same. The only thing that will be different will be that one scene will have a clown in the cast and the other a comedian.</p> <p>Have the students perform their scenes. After each performance, have the class guess which type of character was being depicted and what traits led them to their decision.</p>			
<b>Teaching to Different Types of Learners</b>			
	<b>Visual</b>	<b>Auditory</b>	<b>Kinesthetic/Tactile</b>
<b>Learning Activity</b>	Have students search the Internet for pictures of clowns and comedians, as well as information on the differences and similarities between the two.	Have students work on different vocal techniques when performing to better present differences in comedic and farcical tones.	Have students use props when they perform to better show the differences between comedy and farce.
<b>Special Differentiation Strategies</b>	Provide directions in writing for all activities. Students may wish to write their scenes and have others perform them. Provide students with a written overview of comedians versus clowns.	Read aloud directions to the students. Auditory learners may prefer to hear the different presentations, rather than follow along in written format.	Provide students with props to use when performing. Performance is an excellent strategy to use with kinesthetic/tactile learners. You may also wish to show video excerpts of comedians and clowns.
<b>Evaluation</b>	Students should be able to demonstrate their knowledge of the similarities and differences between comedians and clowns	Students should be able to demonstrate their knowledge of the similarities and differences between comedians and clowns	Students should be able to demonstrate their knowledge of the similarities and differences between comedians and clowns

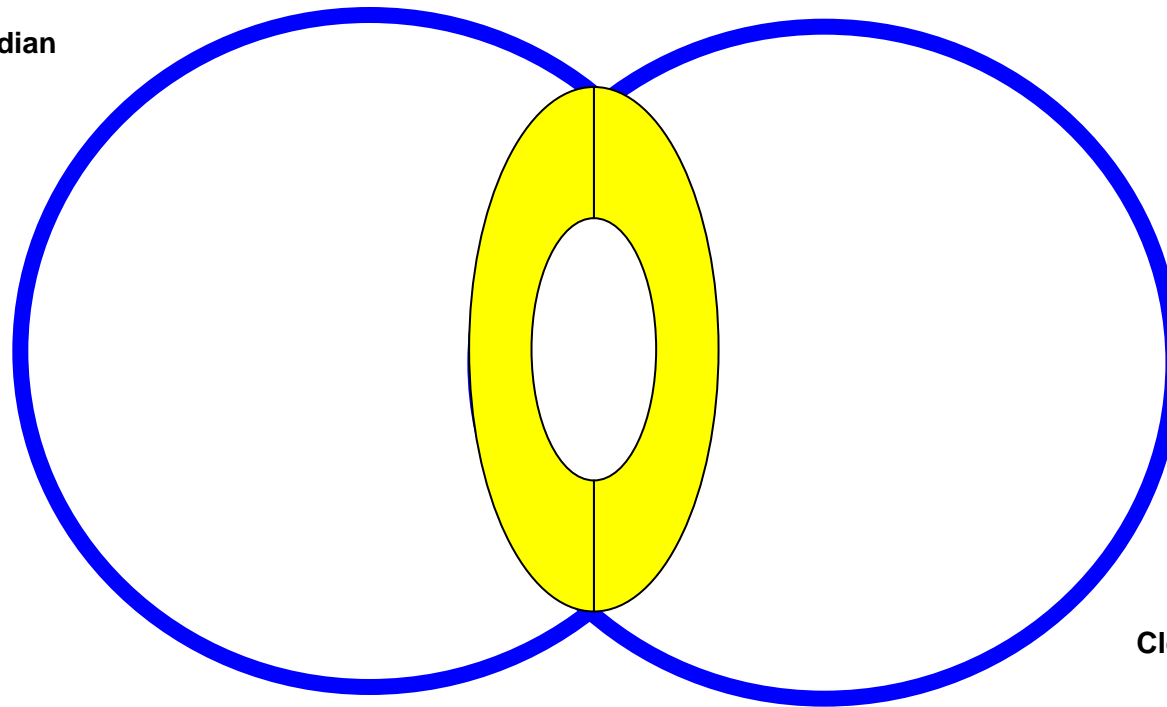
	through written projects, scenes, and completed graphic organizers.	through presenting scenes with characterizations of each.	through drawing pictures or presenting a short play.
<b>The Family and Adult Literacy Connection</b>  Children often view humor very differently than adults. Discuss with the class the different things that children find humorous and how it is related to the child's stage of development.  Parents may wish to watch comedy shows with their children and talk about how the show is the same and how it is different from real life. They may also wish to go to a circus with their children and watch the clowns. Make sure that parents are aware that young children may be fearful of clowns because of their loud and unexpected behaviors. This is a very normal reaction to the situation.		<b>ESE/ESOL Accommodations</b>  Make sure that students understand the differences between comedy and farce through different examples. The teacher may wish to show short video clips of both comedians and clowns so that students better understand the concepts.  Use group activities so that students can use their learning strength in either the written activities or the presentations.	

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### Compare/Contrast

In the diagram below, write in those things that are different between a comedian and a clown. In the middle of the diagram, write in those things that are similar between a comedian and a clown, e.g., they both make people laugh.

**Comedian**



**Clown**

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### Comedians Versus Clowns

Make a list of actors/actresses who are clowns and comedians. Select one person. In the first rectangle, write the name of the actor/actress selected. In the second rectangle, write the place where you have seen him/her. In the third rectangle, write an evaluative statement of whether the actor/actress is a comedian or clown and why.

<b>Name of Actor/Actress</b>	<b>Where Have You Seen Him/Her</b>	<b>What Do You Think?</b>